1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

513 823 Kols generally say that they, unlike the Hindus, are not particular about the direction of their head when they sleep. Inside their own houses they can make their couch in any direction. When they sleep outside, however, they should lie with their heads to the east. And yet, further questionings have revealed, that most Kols have a definite prejudice against sleeping with the head to the north, [764] whether inside or outside the house. No doubt this is because the dead are placed in that position.

231 825 [673] [631] [627 574] ANIMALS AND TREES. *Animals.* Among the Kols there is an exaggerated respect for the cow and it is said that she is the most sacred of all animals. To kill a cow is to commit a great sin, much worse even than killing a Brahmin. In the strictest sense it is murder, and anyone killing a cow even accidentally should make a pilgrimage to the Ganges and offer a gift to the river. On his return he is required to give a feast to the community. Kols as a rule are not rich in cattle and those they possess are a poor lot.

825 [773] [627 574] The palm squirrel (*Sciurus palmarum*), is very commonly found in the villages and frequents the houses of people. Kols have a great respect for this creature and some would even rank it above the cow, for, one said, to kill such an animal was as bad as killing a hundred Brahmins! Popular legend has it that when Rama was building his bridge from India to Ceylon in order to rescue Sita, these squirrels helped him by bringing dust on their tails. Rama was pleased with this act of devotion and stroked the backs of the squirrels and to this day the marks of his hands can be seen in the black strips on their backs. Any one who happens to kill a squirrel should give a feast. Boys will never shoot nor molest them.

231 825 [183] The cat is likewise revered by Kols and is usually called *mai*, mother. In the ordinary sense Kols do not keep nor care for cats; they are just a part of the village and roam it freely in search of food while no one claims particular ownership. Sometimes they multiply to an alarming extent and in one village it was discovered that no chickens could be raised due to the presence of the cats who killed and ate the younger chickens. No effort was made to change this condition nor rid the village of the cats. That would be a breach of custom.

[783] The dogs too are the general property of the village. To Indian villagers the dog is often an impure animal, but this is not true in the case of the Kols, for the touch of the dog is not defiling. He is a village watchman, and in a sense a custodian of their safety, as he gives the village warning should strangers approach. To slay him is to slay

1:Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

till Baijnath arrived the next day intent on beating him. Greeting him he said :- "Baijnath, I wish to give you a great boon. It is that people will worship you and pour water on you first and after that they will worship me. If they should fail to do this to you, they will have no fruit of their labours at all. So now that you have this *bardan* please give me release from this daily beating you are giving me." Hearing this, Baijnath was very happy and Mahadeo was beaten no more. So Kols always worship Baijnath first.[1] 539 773 782

How the Cat became a Household Pet. Once Mahadeo sent a cat to spy upon a certain home. He wanted to know whether there was a fire in there at that particular time. This cat had stayed with Mahadeo for a long time and, obeying his commands, she went to the house where she found the fire burning and milk nicely warmed beside it. There was also some freshly prepared butter on the floor. The cat tasted the butter and found it so delicious that she ate it all. Next she drank the milk, and feeling very comfortable, she curled up to sleep beside the cosy fire. She nevermore left the house, for she preferred it with its warmth, and butter and milk, to the treatment and food she had with Mahadeo. Since that time the cat has become a household animal, and it is a great sin to kill one, as it came directly from Mahadeo. 539 773 231 [673]

Why the Tiger fears the Red Dog. The wild dog, a red dog of India, (*Cyon dakhunensis*) is common in the wilder jungles of Central India. It is much feared by the animals of the forest, including the tiger, and tigers are sometimes killed by it. These dogs always hunt in packs containing often as many as thirty animals, and the pack does not give tongue, coming suddenly upon its prey. 539 773 825

The story goes that once Mahadeo quarrelled with Parvati his wife. He was so annoyed with her that he left home and went into voluntary exile in the forest. Parvati was sorry and wanted to get him back, but was too proud to humble herself before him. Finally she decided to frighten him and thus cause him to return. She was sure that if she could send a tiger after him to annoy him Mahadeo would surely fly to his home for safety. So she used her divine powers to make a tiger go to him, but in vain, for Mahadeo outwitted her, as

1 It is now established that Siva or Mahadeo worship is very ancient. Evidences of this are found in the Mohenjodaro civilization. A Census report notes that "Bhils, Savaias and the Korkus all trace their origin to Mahadeva, though it is possible that the tradition may be a latterly acquired Hindu Idea." (1931—I : 3 B. p. 63). Perhaps this story is a memory of a strife with groups who did trace their ancestry back to Mahadeo. The Kols frequently identify Baiju or Baijnath with the Bhils.